



Security Council

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Letter dated 27 May 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, Osman Saleh (see annex).

I would be most grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Sophia Tesfamariam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 27 May 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On Sunday, 23 May, last week – on the eve of Eritrea’s thirtieth Independence Anniversary – the United States State Department issued a press release announcing, among other matters, a “visa restriction policy” on the issuance of visas for any current or former Eritrean government officials, members of the security forces, or other individuals responsible for, or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia.

The State Department’s announcement, which alludes to additional “punitive” measures that will ensue in due time, is only the latest in a string of unilateral acts of intimidation and interference (United States State Department press release of 15 May 2021; United States Senate resolution 97 of 19 May 2021) in the internal affairs of sovereign nations in breach of international law.

Let us put the record straight.

The current situation in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia is the direct and cumulative consequence of misguided measures pursued, by successive United States Administrations in the last two decades, to prop up and embolden the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) to flagrantly violate international law with impunity and to indulge in acts of continuous regional destabilization.

The United States marshalled its diplomatic clout in support of the TPLF regime when the latter rejected the Security Council-guaranteed Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission final and binding award of 13 April 2002. The TPLF regime not only continued to occupy sovereign Eritrean territories, but persisted in its acts of belligerence by intermittently launching provocative military assaults against Eritrea in the period thereafter.

Not only were these acts tolerated through blanket United States diplomatic succour, but Security Council sanctions, including an arms embargo, were imposed on Eritrea on spurious pretexts and in contravention of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. On the contrary, the United States went out of its way to apply a waiver on its own sanctions regime to allow a TPLF arms purchase from North Korea. As it happened, a heavy weapons shipment destined for Ethiopia, and that was impounded on the high seas in 2009, was released and allowed to reach its destination.

When Eritrea and Ethiopia signed the Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship on 9 July 2018, TPLF continued to obstruct key pillars of the peace agreement that was anchored on full respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the two countries. TPLF menacingly blocked the envisioned withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Badme and other occupied Eritrean sovereign territories in accordance with article 4 of the peace agreement.

Even though it was removed from power in early 2018, TPLF nonetheless continued to ramp up its military preparations from its enclave in the Tigray Region; training some 250,000 militias and special forces. Finally, it unleashed a massive and reckless attack on all the contingents of Ethiopia’s Northern Command on the night of 3 November last year.

The objective of this dangerous and unprecedented military assault was to neutralize the Northern Command, capture all its weaponry (it possessed over 80 per cent of the total arsenal of the country) and topple the Federal Government of Ethiopia. The occupation of Eritrean sovereign territories was an extension of this reckless scheme. Indeed, TPLF attacked Eritrea with long-range missiles in the early

days of the war that it had unleashed. All these indelible facts are fully known and available in the public domain.

In view of these facts, to apportion blame on Eritrea for the troubling events in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia is unfounded, unfair and illicit. And in these crucial times, the United States Administration is stoking further conflict and destabilization through unwarranted interferences and acts of intimidation in violation of international law and the sovereignty of the countries in the region. The apparent objective of these acts is to resuscitate the remnants of the TPLF regime. The massive disinformation campaign that was set in motion, and that continues to be disseminated through major and pliant media outlets, is apparently designed to camouflage and rationalize these illicit schemes.

Under the circumstances, the Government of Eritrea urges the Security Council to take appropriate measures to redress this injustice.

(Signed) Osman **Saleh**
